



15 March 2005



Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program

1. Last year I issued initial guidance regarding the Command's approach to sexual assault and published our Sexual Misconduct Awareness Campaign. Since then, we have received new DOD and Army-level guidance. To bring our program into line with this guidance, I have directed that USAREUR make a transition from the original Sexual Misconduct Awareness Campaign to a new Army in Europe Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program. The new program will initially be published in April as a memorandum followed by a new Army in Europe regulation over the course of the next year.
2. DOD has defined sexual assault as intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, physical threat, or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes rape, nonconsensual sodomy, indecent assault (unwanted, inappropriate sexual contact), or attempts to commit any of these acts. Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender, spousal relationship, or the age of the victim.
3. Sexual assault has no place in the Army. Allegations of sexual assault must be investigated promptly and impartially and resolved expeditiously. Commanders and leaders at all levels are responsible for providing a safe and healthy environment for those in their charge. This responsibility requires leaders to take action to prevent sexual assault, protect and support victims, and hold offenders accountable by taking all appropriate administrative and judicial actions based on the facts and circumstances of each case.
4. The Army is committed to training leaders and Soldiers in this highly sensitive area. Progressive, sequential, and tailored training is the key to eliminating a climate that fosters sexual assault and hinders reporting. In Europe, training on the prevention of sexual assault will be part of inprocessing, annual unit training, leader development and professional military education programs, predeployment, and reintegration. In addition to this training, the Army plans to direct that each battalion appoint at least two unit victim advocates (UVAs) to provide support to victims throughout the medical, investigative, and judicial processes when it releases the new edition of AR 600-20 later this spring.
5. The crimes included in the definition of sexual assault are collectively the second most-reported felony in the Army in Europe. Common factors in cases of sexual assault include the following:
 - Young Soldiers (private through specialist) are the most likely victims and perpetrators.
 - 76 percent of sexual assaults (including rape) occur in unlocked barracks or Government quarters.
 - 74 percent of sexual assaults (including rape) involve alcohol.
 - 50 percent of the rape victims know the alleged offender.
 - Most sexual assaults occur between 0100 and 0500 on Saturdays and Sundays.

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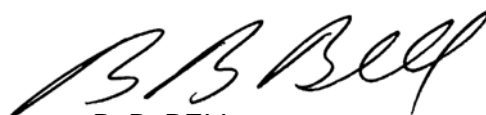
6. Commanders and leaders can influence many of these factors through proactive preventive measures and education. As an example, commanders can provide rape-prevention and alcohol-awareness training, implement a more stringent barracks policy, and increase the presence of unit leadership during high-risk periods.

7. Commanders and leaders must understand their inherent responsibility to respond compassionately but resolutely to allegations of sexual assault in their units. Persons alleging sexual assault against themselves will be considered victims and helped and protected, regardless of the final determination of the facts and circumstances in the case. This must be the approach and can be modified only after commanders fully examine the facts and circumstances. Victims must be helped and protected immediately when they allege an assault. I want victims to know that they have the following rights:

- The right to be treated with fairness and respect for their dignity and privacy.
- The right to immediate and effective medical care and attention, including long-term follow-up treatment, if eligible.
- The right to be reasonably protected from the accused offender.
- The right to be notified of court proceedings.
- The right to be present at all public court proceedings related to the offense (unless the court determines otherwise).
- The right to talk with the attorney for the Government in the case.
- The right to restitution, if appropriate.
- The right to information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, and release of the offender from custody.

8. Victims deserve professional, competent, and compassionate assistance. Again, assistance must be made available to the victim immediately after an allegation is made, regardless of the status of the criminal or command investigation. Commanders must ensure that victims are aware of the support services available in the command and community to help them through their difficult ordeal. These services include, but are not limited to, those available from law enforcement officials, medical providers (social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists), judge advocates, chaplains, UVAs, community victim advocates (CVAs), and sexual assault response coordinators (SARCs). The CVAs and SARCs will be embedded in Army Community Service and work under the auspices of the Family Advocacy Program in our communities. The SARCs will oversee local implementation of the Army's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program. The CVAs, like the UVAs, are available to help victims and provide support throughout the medical, investigative, and judicial processes. In garrison, Soldiers will have the option of seeking assistance from the UVA or CVA based on personal preference.

9. This issue deserves our utmost attention. I want to ensure that you understand our responsibilities and share my concern for the safety of the Soldiers, civilians, and family members who live and work in our communities. Our units and community resources must be ready to ensure the well-being of our force so that we can continue to execute with excellence Any Mission, Anywhere.



B. B. BELL
General, US Army
Commanding

ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!